



COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ – FEBRUARY 2006

The 2006 budget for the Town of Baie d'Urfé was adopted at a special Council meeting on December 21st, 2005 and modified at a Special Council on January 26th, 2006 in response to the Agglomeration Council budget deposited January 23rd.

In determining the budget for this year, the Council has tried to return to the basic Baie d'Urfé philosophy of providing essential services, with the maximum use of citizen participation to minimize cost. Services will be restored to pre-merger levels wherever possible, with a few exceptions. All the outstanding costs associated with the merger will be absorbed in 2006.

In accordance with this philosophy:

- the Public Security service provided by the Borough has been discontinued;
- the animal control service has been restored, with Lola Bourget again serving as Animal Control Officer;
- dog licenses will again be valid for the life of the animal, at a cost of \$10.

In addition:

- bus tickets will be available to seniors who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement as well as the government Old Age Security Pension;
- the cleaning of septic tanks will be paid for by the Town, continuing the program initiated by the Borough;
- the security patrol in the industrial zone will continue, financed by a special tariff of \$2 586 per business;
- the Council has taken the lead in minimizing costs by agreeing unanimously not to be paid a salary for the period from their swearing-in in October to the end of 2005 (a saving of about \$7 000 to the Town)..

Water will still be charged on the basis of consumption, as decreed by the Minister for Municipal Affairs. This results in a substantially lower cost to Baie d'Urfé than a charge on the basis of property valuation, as proposed in Mayor Tremblay's original budget, which was withdrawn in December. The base water charge to householders will remain the same at \$80. The rate charged for water in excess of 50,000 gallons per household will increase by 5%. This rate had not changed in the last four years.

The total budget of the Town is \$5.18 million. Of this amount, just over half is raised through general taxation, and almost half from other sources. After allowing for water and other revenues (chiefly transfer taxes and local improvement taxes), a sum of \$2.71 million remains to be raised through general taxation.

The mill rate for residential properties has been set at \$0.1965 per \$100 of property value, and the mill rate for non-residential properties at \$1.01 per \$100 of property value.

The residential mill rate in the Agglomeration budget was \$0.7818 per \$100, giving a total residential mill rate, combining local and agglomeration rates of \$0.9783 per \$100. This combined mill rate translates into an average increase in residential tax bills of 4.4%.



This 4.1% increase includes the effect of the average increase in property values since 2005. It is important to note however that individual valuations, and consequently individual tax bills, may vary substantially from this average increase. In 2004, the Secor Commission had predicted average residential tax increases of 14.8% for Baie d'Urfé following demerger. More recently, the Transition Committee had predicted increases of 10.9%.

On the non-residential side, the mill rate in the Agglomeration budget is \$2.6666 per \$100, giving a total mill rate of about \$3.6766 per \$100. This leads to an average increase in non-residential tax bills of about 4.4%, again after allowing for the average increase in property evaluation.

Municipalities which remain merged with Montreal will have residential mill rates for this year in the range of \$1.29 to \$1.55 per \$100. Had we not succeeded in demerging, our mill rate also would have steadily increased over the next several years to these levels (compared to our rate for this year of \$0.9783). An additional benefit of demerging is that we can compensate to some extent for changes in property valuations, by adjusting the mill rate. Had we remained merged, we would have suffered the full impact of all future increases in property valuations.

It is interesting to note that the taxes levied on Baie d'Urfé by the Agglomeration Council alone exceed by about 9% the total taxes paid by Baie d'Urfé in 2001. In other words, the cost of Agglomeration services alone in 2006 is significantly higher than the cost of all services, including both local and MUC, in 2001.

Janet Ryan
Councillor